

1 Thessalonians

Paul, Silva'nus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalo'nians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace. We give thanks to God always for you all, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of

5 love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. For we know, brethren beloved by God, that he has chosen you; for our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you

10 received the word in much affliction, with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit; so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedo'nia and in Acha'ia. For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedo'nia and Acha'ia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything. For they themselves report concerning us

15 what a welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come. For you yourselves know, brethren, that our visit to you was not in vain; but though we had already suffered and been shamefully treated at Philip'pi, as

20 you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God

in the face of great opposition. For our appeal does not spring from error or
uncleanness, nor is it made with guile; but just as we have been approved
by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please men, but
to please God who tests our hearts. For we never used either words of
5 flattery, as you know, or a cloak for greed, as God is witness; nor did we
seek glory from men, whether from you or from others, though we might
have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you,
like a nurse taking care of her children. So, being affectionately desirous of
you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also
10 our own selves, because you had become very dear to us. For you remember
our labor and toil, brethren; we worked night and day, that we might not
burden any of you, while we preached to you the gospel of God. You are
witnesses, and God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our
behavior to you believers; for you know how, like a father with his children,
15 we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to lead a
life worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory. And we
also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God
which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as
what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers. For
20 you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus which

are in Judea; for you suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they did from the Jews, who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out, and displease God and oppose all men by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles that they may be saved--so as always to fill
5 up the measure of their sins. But God's wrath has come upon them at last!

But since we were bereft of you, brethren, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face; because we wanted to come to you--I, Paul, again and again--but Satan hindered us. For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before
10 our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? For you are our glory and joy.

Therefore when we could bear it no longer, we were willing to be left behind at Athens alone, and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's servant in the gospel of Christ, to establish you in your faith and to exhort you, that no one be moved by these afflictions. You yourselves know that this is to be
15 our lot. For when we were with you, we told you beforehand that we were to suffer affliction; just as it has come to pass, and as you know. For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent that I might know your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and that our labor would be in vain. But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has
20 brought us the good news of your faith and love and reported that you

always remember us kindly and long to see us, as we long to see you-- for
this reason, brethren, in all our distress and affliction we have been
comforted about you through your faith; for now we live, if you stand fast
in the Lord. For what thanksgiving can we render to God for you, for all
5 the joy which we feel for your sake before our God, praying earnestly night
and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in
your faith? Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct
our way to you; and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to
one another and to all men, as we do to you, so that he may establish your
10 hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of
our Lord Jesus with all his saints. Finally, brethren, we beseech and exhort
you in the Lord Jesus, that as you learned from us how you ought to live
and to please God, just as you are doing, you do so more and more. For
you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. For this is
15 the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from unchastity; that
each one of you know how to take a wife for himself in holiness and honor,
not in the passion of lust like heathen who do not know God; that no man
transgress, and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an
avenger in all these things, as we solemnly forewarned you. For God has not
20 called us for uncleanness, but in holiness. Therefore whoever disregards this,

disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you. But
concerning love of the brethren you have no need to have any one write to
you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another; and
indeed you do love all the brethren throughout Macedo'nia. But we exhort
5 you, brethren, to do so more and more, to aspire to live quietly, to mind
your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we charged you; so that
you may command the respect of outsiders, and be dependent on nobody.
But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are
asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since
10 we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will
bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by
the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming
of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord
himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the
15 archangel's call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in
Christ will rise first; then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up
together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so we
shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these
words. But as to the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need to
20 have anything written to you. For you yourselves know well that the day of

the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When people say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as travail comes upon a woman with child, and there will be no escape. But you are not in darkness, brethren, for that day to surprise you like a thief. For you
5 are all sons of light and sons of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. For those who sleep sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But, since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For
10 God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we wake or sleep we might live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing. But we beseech you, brethren, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to
15 esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the idlers, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is
20 the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit, do not

despise prophesying, but test everything; hold fast what is good, abstain from every form of evil. May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, and he will

5 do it. Brethren, pray for us. Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss. I adjure you by the Lord that this letter be read to all the brethren. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. *

* From the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright 1946, 1952, and 1971 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved.